



STRANGE PHENOMENA INVESTIGATIONS



AUG
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ENIGMAS

UNBIASED ACCOUNTS INVOLVING UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES
AND, AS YET.... UNDISCOVERED SCIENCES....
GHOSTS.... U.F.O'S AND OTHER ITEMS OF WEIRD AND
WONDERFUL PHENOMENA!

GULF BREEZE MODEL FOUND ?

SEE PAGE 3.

Operation Congo.

THE FIRST BRITISH/CONGOLESE MOKELE-MBEMBE

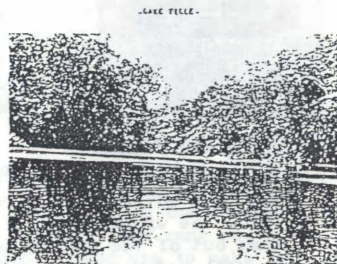
EXPEDITION OF 1985-86. PART TWO.

BY BILLY GIBBONS.

After several days at Boha Village, the residents became more accustomed to our presence, sensing that we were in some ways different from the French or American expeditions which had visited them a few years before. Trust grew and friendships formed. The village chief had a particular dream which he regarded as a good omen. We were good men. Young and to be trusted with a visit to the tranquil Lake Telle. Six strong guides were chosen by the village elders, including the village president whose family are regarded as the "owners" of the Mokele-Mbembe. We agreed to pay our porters the sum of 7, 000cfa per day, including a continuous supply of cassava, cigarettes and disposable lighters. The village chief graciously accepted bottles of alcohol and a most outrageous pair of red sunglasses which he proudly wore during our stay in Boha.

With our twelve man team prepared for the long trek through the rain forest, we retired early in order to make a fresh start the following day. Last minute preparations by the guides, gave us the opportunity to enjoy a breakfast of fish and cassava. The entire expedition were later assembled outside the chief's hut, where drums were beaten and palm wine passed around. As we headed into the forest in single file the village population gathered to cheer us on our way. Barely 800m on, the guides decided to stop and enjoy a belated breakfast.

Mark Rothermel set up his 16mm Bolex camera to record the beginning of our 40 mile trek. Although the ground was dry with little swamp or deep mud, the trek proved difficult and exhausting. The British found the pace of the guides physically taxing, and rest periods were necessary for recuperation. When the party halted to prepare evening camp, it was necessary to pitch our tents on beds of dry leaves to avoid dampness from penetrating our ground sheets. Ants and termite colonies were present and caused damage to nylon tents and leather goods. Little sunlight penetrated the dense forest, giving only a dim level of light during daylight hours. The guides were most successful in their hunting trips, returning with either monkey or a couple of duckier for



TWO VIEWS OF LAKE TELLE.

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dinner. The only water available was from muddy pools, which had to be treated with chlorine tablets after boiling. The trip to the Lake Telle area took three days, with our final camp established on the edge of the 3km swamp which surrounds the Lake. It was here that the guides decided to allow us to visit three small bodies of water situated deep in the forest. No whiteman had ever been allowed to visit these small lakes, in which the Mokele-Mbembe is said to feed, prior to moving on to Lake Telle to browse or to facilitate movement.

The small lakes were held sacred by the Boha people, who would never fish in these waters. Twenty four hour observation by three expedition members did not produce a monster sighting, although plenty of fish and turtle life was in evidence. Marcellin Agnagna claimed to have observed a fish with a shark like fin which surfaced briefly. The final leg to the lake was a difficult task, which necessitated hopping from one huge exposed tree root to another in order to avoid slipping into waist high swamp. Whenever the expedition members stopped for a brief respite, large swarms of bees would converge on each individual member, resulting in a number of stings and physical discomfort. The swamp reached the very edge of Lake Telle, a shallow, almost oval lake some 5km in circumference.

During our investigations, we found that the lake rarely exceeded 3m in depth. Previous expeditions which had visited Lake Telle reported magnetic disturbance near the north side of the lake. We did not at any time detect any such presence, either with compass or photographic equipment. Fish and turtle life are abundant in Lake Telle, and a large population of fish eating crocodiles. Large pythons can often be observed lazing in the mid-day sun on tree branches overhanging the Lake, and some monkey colonies can be heard moving through the area.

During our five day stay at Lake Telle, we made a one day trip to the north bank of the Lake. Three lobes of water stretch into the forest from the Lake and are said to be used by Mokele-Mbembe to enter the Lake from their browsing area in the swamps. Our guides became quite fearful during our examination of those lobes, and attempted to lead us away from the immediate area. Around 1959/60, three Mokele-Mbembes entered the Lake via lobe no 8 daily, disturbing the fishing activities of the forest dwelling pigmies. In spite of their fear of these creatures, the pigmy fishermen erected a stake barrier across the lobe to stop the Mokele-Mbembes from entering the Lake. When one animal was observed attempting to break through the barrier, the fishermen speared the monster to death and dismembered the corpse. A feast was held, during which the flesh of the Mokele Mbembe was devoured. It is claimed that those who participated in the feast died shortly after. Thus, the mythification evolved around these large mysterious animals. Our investigations did not uncover any large animal, although our porters became increasingly afraid of the area. We eventually returned to our base camp on the East bank. A large number of fish and insect species were collected and preserved in formaldehyde.

Leaving Lake Telle, the return trek took two days to complete. A further three days were spent at Boha, where the British team were shown a small swamp hole said to have been inhabited by a Mokele-Mbembe in 1984. This proved too shallow during the dry season to herald any positive evidence of habitation. The villagers honoured Gibbons by "consecrating" him as "President" of Lake Telle, quite an honour for a white outsider. (It could only happen to you Billy, The Ed). He was further presented with a ceremonial spear as a sign of local authority. Indeed, Gibbons appeared to gain the trust and friendship of most villagers we encountered during Operation Congo, which may have had something to do with his red hair and beard. With no outboard motor available to ferry the expedition back to Epena, arrangements had to be made to paddle the 100km up river.

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Leaving before daybreak, the sheer physical effort by all was a backbreaking and exhausting effort. The entire trip took nine hours with only a one hour break. The team travelled from Epena to Botala by pirogue, taking a further seven hours to complete. We were almost out of expedition funds, which made it difficult to hire porters to assist the moving of bulky equipment to Bimbo, where a lift on a government truck to Impfondo could be had. Eventually, two young Congolese men were willing to assist with the carrying of our equipment to Bimbo. Four such trips over 25km were necessary, with welcome lifts on government or road construction vehicles available from Bimbo. Morale and health suffered throughout the expedition, with Gibbons losing 24lbs in weight through chronic diarrhoea and various skin diseases. Della-Porta suffered bouts of dysentery, whilst Rothermel contracted malaria. All diseases and infections were brought under control through careful and diligent medication, but progress was slow due to the poor diet endured by all.

Pastor E. Thomas and his wife kindly provided the British team with a vacant mission house for two weeks, including meals and free medical treatment. Rothermel and Walls flew from Impfondo to Brazzaville in order to cable further funds from London. Gibbons and Della-Porta followed one week later, flying over Lake Telle on a Lina Congo 737, en route to Ouesso. In Brazzaville, we completed our field report for the Ministry of Water & Forests, with the expedition formally terminating on May the 5th 1986. Operation Congo lasted approximately 55 days, only half the amount of time we had originally intended to spend in the rainforest.

RESULTS.

The fauna and flora of the Congo has remained relatively unstudied. No long term research has ever been undertaken by any group of zoologists, nor has a complete systematic inventory been compiled on all living forms in the Likouala region. Certain animal species were observed by expedition members during the trek through the forest and savannah areas at Djeke and Boha. The buffalo was observed in herds of up to 8 individuals and wild forest pig were encountered near Lake Telle. One specimen, shot by our porters, weighed over 220kg. The forest elephant (*Loxodonta africana cyclotis*), is still abundant, but no specimens were encountered by Operation Congo. The western lowland gorilla, was observed en route to Lake Telle. Fish eagles and black kites were plentiful around Lake Telle, and monkey colonies were also evident. No monkey colonies exist near the villages mainly due to hunting by the local tribespeople.

Chimpanzee families (*Pan troglodytes*) are common around the Lake, as are groups of Bay Duckier (*Cephalophus dasalis*), and the Congo stripper squirrel (*Funiscureus Congiceus*). Various reptile forms were also present throughout the Likouala, The Leopard (*Pantherus pardus*) was present throughout the Likouala region, and made the occasional raid into various villages. Venomous snakes are common in the Likouala, and these include the Gaboon viper, the Rhinoceros viper, and the green mamba.

The Operation Congo team collected a number of specimens. These included members of the Caicelian family including the African lungfish. The remains of an unidentified monkey was presented to the British Museum of Natural History, who later classified this as a new subspecies of *Cercocebus galeritus*.

Quite apart from the Mokele-Mbembe, members of the Operation Congo team received a number of reports concerning other strange creatures said to inhabit the vast swamps of the Likouala. Some of the descriptions appear to correspond closely with extinct animal forms. A good deal of cross examination on these reports lead us to conclude that the Mokele-Mbembe and other unknown creatures of the Congo are living, breathing animals which have yet to be clearly identified.

Many of the tribespeople were clearly afraid to divulge certain information on the exact spot where a Mokele-Mbembe may be readily seen and photographed for fear of falling ill, even dying. We recommend that an expedition comprising of scientifically qualified members, should spend a minimum period of three months in the Likouala area north of Lake Telle.

M. Rothermel.
W.J. Gibbons.
J.C.F. Walls.
J.B. Della Porta.

Earth Lights Revelation

UFOs and Mystery Lightform Phenomena:
The Earth's Secret Energy Force

By
PAUL DEVEREUX
With

David Clarke, Andy Roberts & Paul McCartney

BOOKS

REVIEWED BY RALPH NOTES.

BOOKS

There are remarkable energies around our planet often invisible and intangible, they sometimes manifest as mysterious lights which account for at least a proportion of UFO reports. They may be the source of apparitions, hauntings, poltergeist activity, 'mysterious animals', and other such border-land phenomena. They appear to have a strange relationship with human consciousness and human intentions. Our understanding of them may be the key to considerable advances in the knowledge of ourselves and the world we live in.

These are the large claims made by this interesting and exciting book. It follows of course in the line of succession from *EARTHLIGHTS* (Devereux & McCartney Turnstone Press 1982) and the work initiated by Persinger in *Space Time Transients*